City of Reading Planning Commission Meeting Meeting Minutes: June 28, 2022

PC Members Present

Chairman Wayne Bealer
Vice Chairman Will Cinfici
Commissioner Lee Olsen, AIA
Commissioner Bob Conklin, AIA
Commissioner Nelson DeLeon

Staff and Consultants Present

Jerome Skrincosky, AICP, Planning Consultant Tim Krall, PE, Public Works Department Michelle Mayfield, Esquire, Legal Consultant Matthew Fessler, Esquire, Legal Consultant Thomas Neff, Zoning Administrator Emily Diaz-Melendez, Zoning Officer

Others Present

Alan Shuman (PC Report 3 and 10)
Dan Laudenslayer (PC Agenda 4 and 5)
Craig Bonenberger (PC Agenda 6)
Gregg Bogia (PC Agenda 7 and 8)
Andrew Roland (PC Agenda 7 and 8)
Larry Miller, Esquire (PC Agenda 9)
Marc Geddio (PC Agenda 9)
Aristides Otero (PC Agenda 11)

Wayne Gehris (PC Agenda 11)
David Schrader (PC Agenda 11)
James Lynch (PC Agenda 11)
Scott Hunsicker (PC Agenda 12)
Michael Kissinger (PC Agenda 12)
Conner Henderson (PC Agenda 12)

Reporter: Channel 69 News Reporter: Reading Eagle

(1) Call Meeting to Order: Chairman Bealer called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

(2) Acknowledgement of PC Members in Attendance and PC Meeting Agenda

- (a) Planning Commission Members in Attendance: Wayne Bealer; Will Cinfici; Lee Olsen; Bob Conklin; and Nelson DeLeon.
- (b) Amendment to the Planning Commission Meeting Agenda: The Planning Commission was advised that the agenda was issued, amended and posted in accordance with all prevailing requirements. Commissioner Olsen made a motion to amend the Planning Commission Meeting Agenda as posted by the City of Reading. Commissioner Conklin seconded the motion. The vote on the motion was unanimously approved (5-0).
- (c) Planning Commission Meeting Agenda: Commissioner Cinfici made a motion to accept the amended Planning Commission Meeting Agenda for June 28, 2022. Commissioner Olsen seconded the motion. The vote on the motion was unanimously approved (5-0).

(3) 35 North 6th Street Minor Land Development Plan Application; Revised Plan of Record PC 2022-110; 35 North 6th Street; Revised Preliminary/Final Plan Review

- (a) Application: The Applicant (Shuman Development Group) submitted a Preliminary/Final Plan for review. The development is an adaptive reuse and redevelopment project that includes an existing 5-story building located at 35 North 6th Street. This project shall include a combination of uses that will include: a commercial food court on the first floor, professional offices on the second floor; and residential (39 apartment units) uses on the upper floors. Zoning relief was previously granted by the Zoning Hearing Board via ZHB Appeal 2021-11.
- (b) Correspondence: Hawk Valley Associates issued a review letter on June 20, 2022. The Plan was also reviewed by the Berks County Planning Commission on May 26, 2022.

- (c) Discussion: The Applicant should resolve the remaining issues contained within the review letter issued by Hawk Valley Associates as well as the reservation of off-site parking spaces. Public Works Department will also need to consider the past and future sanitary sewage disposal values to ensure compliance with PADEP requirements.
- (d) Action on the Plan: Commissioner Olsen made a motion to approve the plan subject to the Applicant resolving all issues referenced within the review letter issued by Hawk Valley Associates on June 20, 2022. Commissioner DeLeon seconded the motion. The vote on the motion was unanimously approved (5-0).

(4) 532-534 Minor Street Annexation and Land Development Plan Application PC 2022-109; 532, 532R and 534 Minor Street; Revised Preliminary/Final Plan Review

- (a) Application: The Applicant (Caisaguano and Aguas) submitted a Preliminary/Final Plan for review. The development is an annexation and redevelopment project that includes an existing taxi cab dispatch operation located at 532, 532R and 534 Minor Street. Zoning relief was previously granted by the Zoning Hearing Board via ZHB Appeal 2018-22 and 2021-09.
- (b) Correspondence: Hawk Valley Associates issued a review letter on June 20, 2022. The Berks County Planning Commission also issued a review on June 2, 2022.
- (c) Discussion: The Applicant should resolve the remaining issues contained with the review letter issued by Hawk Valley Associates. The Applicant should also resolve the requirements for curbs, sidewalks and driveways with the Public Works Department.
- (d) Action on the Plan: Commissioner DeLeon made a motion to approve the plan subject to the Applicant resolving all comments that have been issued for this plan and establishing an improvements agreement for the required site improvements. Commissioner Conklin seconded the motion. The vote on the motion was unanimously approved (5-0).

(5) Fisher Annexation Plan (Riverdale Parcels 547-557) PC 2022-113; 2161 Downing Street; Preliminary/Final Plan Review

- (a) Application: The Applicant (Scott Fisher) submitted a Preliminary/Final Plan for review. The purpose of the plan is to annex or consolidate deeds as part of 2162 Downing Street.
- (b) Correspondence: Hawk Valley Associates issued a review letter on June 21, 2022. The Berks County Planning Commission has not issued their review at this time.
- (c) Discussion: The Applicant should resolve the comments issued by Hawk Valley Associates. The street address will need to be confirmed with Public Works Department. The Berks County Planning Commission will also need to issue their review letter.
- (d) Action on the Plan: Commissioner Olsen made a motion to table action on the plan since the review letter from the Berks County Planning Commission was not issued at this time. Commissioner Conklin seconded the motion. The vote on the motion was unanimously approved (5-0).

(6) 615-619 Walnut Street Annexation and Land Development Plan Application PC 2022-111; 615, 617 and 619 Walnut Street; Preliminary/Final Plan Review

- (a) Application: The Applicant (Berks County Nonprofit Development) has submitted a Preliminary/Final Plan for review. The development includes an annexation of existing lots at 615, 617 and 619 Walnut Street and by applying adaptive reuse requirements for the building to provide 12 residential apartment units for homeless veterans and a designated office on the first floor of the consolidated building.
- (b) Correspondence: Hawk Valley Associates issued a review letter on June 22, 2022. The Berks County Planning Commission has not issued their review at this time.

- (c) Recusal: Commissioner Olsen did not participate in the review, discussion and/or taking any action on this plan since he is providing professional services to the Applicant.
- (d) Discussion: The Applicant should resolve the comments issued within the review letter issued by Hawk Valley Associates and the Public Works Department.
- (e) Action on the Plan: Commissioner Bealer made a motion to table action on the plan since the review letter from the Berks County Planning Commission was not issued at this time. Commissioner DeLeon seconded the motion. The vote on the motion was unanimously approved (4-0). Commissioner Olsen abstained from voting on this motion.

(7) Bern Street Car Wash (Lot 1) Subdivision and Land Development Plan Application PC 2022-104; 1725 North 5th Street; Final Plan Review

- (a) Application: The Applicant (Andrew Roland) submitted a Final Plan for review. The development is a redevelopment project that will include a car wash to be contained on a 1.55 acre lot located at 1725 North 5th Street with access onto Bern Street.
- (b) Correspondence: Hawk Valley Associates issued a review letter on June 21, 2022. The Plan was previously reviewed by other departments and agencies.
- (c) Discussion: The Applicant will need to resolve the comments issued within the letter issued by Hawk Valley Associates and the Public Works Department. It was determined that a zoom meeting should be scheduled with the Applicant in order to discuss the technical issues involving site accessibility (vehicular and pedestrian), stormwater management, sanitary sewage disposal and municipal site improvements for this project.
- (d) Action: Commissioner Cinfici made a motion to table action on this project until the technical issues can be resolved. Commissioner Olsen seconded the motion. The vote on the motion was unanimously approved (5-0).

(8) Bern Street Storage (Lot 2) Subdivision and Land Development Plan Application PC 2022-105; 1704 North 6th Street; Final Plan Review

- (a) Application: The Applicant (Andrew Roland) submitted a Final Plan for review. The development is a redevelopment project that will include a self-storage facility to be contained on a 2.37 acre lot located at 1704 North 6th Street with access onto Bern Street.
- (b) Correspondence: Hawk Valley Associates issued a review letter on June 22, 2022. The Plan was previously reviewed by other departments and agencies.
- (c) Discussion: The Applicant will need to resolve the comments issued within the letter issued by Hawk Valley Associates and the Public Works Department. It was determined that a zoom meeting should be scheduled with the Applicant in order to discuss the technical issues involving site accessibility (vehicular and pedestrian), stormwater management, sanitary sewage disposal and municipal site improvements for this project.
- (d) Action: Commissioner Olsen made a motion to table action on this project until the technical issues can be resolved. Commissioner DeLeon seconded the motion. The vote on the motion was unanimously approved (5-0).

(9) Iron Gate Land Development Plan Application PC 2021-119; 228 Moss Street; Preliminary Plan Review

(a) Application: The Applicant (Ingenious Consulting Services and Iron Gate Builders) submitted a Preliminary Plan Application for review. The development is a redevelopment project that will include a self-storage facility on a 10,378 square foot property at 228 Moss Street. The Applicant has received zoning relief for this project via ZHB Appeal 2020-21.

- (b) Correspondence: Hawk Valley Associates issued a review letter on January 21, 2022. There have been other correspondence, conceptual plans and emails that have been issued by the representatives of the Applicant and the City of Reading.
- (c) Discussion: Moss Street in conjunction with the proposed site design has limitations for site accessibility, turning movements, parking and loading. Further, the adjacent public alleys located on the north and west side of the property does not provide options to improve the site accessibility issues. The Applicant will need to coordinate site accessibility restrictions with legally posted signs and lease agreements with the tenants in order to restrict the size of the trucks attempting to gain access to the self-storage facility. The Applicant shall revise the plan to consider the comments that have been considered at the meeting.
- (d) Action: Commissioner Olsen made a motion to table action on this project until the plan can be revised to reflect the discussion at this meeting. Commissioner Cinfici seconded the motion. The vote on the motion was unanimously approved (5-0).

(10) Banquet Hall at 46 South 5th Street; Conditional Use Application 2022-03 46 South 5th Street (Elks Club Building); Planning and Zoning Staff Report

- (a) Application: The Applicant (Reading Historic Properties, LP) has submitted Conditional Use Application 2022-03 in order to permit a banquet hall at 46 South 5th Street. The Elks Club Building is an abandon commercial 3-story building that includes 27,000 +/- square feet. The Applicant has indicated that the building will be utilized and occupied in a similar fashion as the Abraham Lincoln Building located at North 5th Street and Washington Street.
- (b) Correspondence: The Planning and Zoning Offices issued a Staff Report on June 21, 2022, which provides an assessment of this development.
- (c) Discussion: The Applicant provided a presentation of the proposed banquet hall use considering the information contained within the application, the issues presented within the Staff Report and the questions that were presented by the Planning Commission. City Council has scheduled a Public Hearing on July 13, 2022.
- (d) Recommendation: The Planning Commission has the option to provide a recommendation to City Council regarding Conditional Use Application 2022-03. Commissioner Olsen made a motion to recommend that City Council consider the approval of Conditional Use Application 2022-03 considering the historic significance and prominence of the Elks Club Building within the City of Reading and provided that the Applicant seek the professional services of a licensed architect with experience with historic preservation efforts so this project can be successfully implemented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Cinfici. A question on the motion was presented regarding the hours of operation, which should be designated by the Applicant and/or stipulated by City Council as part of their formal decision. The vote on the motion was unanimously approved (5-0).

(11) Reading School District (New School); Sketch Plan Application PC 2022-112; 801 North 9th Street; Sketch Plan Review

- (a) Application: The Applicant (Reading School District) submitted a Sketch Plan for informal review and discussion. The Applicant is proposing a new school containing 95,188 square feet on a 2.42 acre site located at 801 North 9th Street.
- (b) Correspondence: Hawk Valley Associates issued an informal review on June 24, 2022.
- (c) Discussion: The Applicant informally presented the Sketch Plan and other documents to the Planning Commission, which included discussion on: zoning compliance; site accessibility; parking and loading; demolition; environmental compliance; stormwater management; educational opportunities; neighborhood compatibility; project schedule; and other issues.

(d) Action on the Plan: The Planning Commission took no action on the Sketch Plan. The Applicant was instructed to submit a Preliminary Plan Application for formal review.

(12) First Energy Stadium/Reading Phillies Expansion Project; Sketch Plan Application PC 2022-115; 1900-2000 Centre Avenue; Sketch Plan Review

- (a) Application: The Applicant (Reading Baseball, LP) submitted a Sketch Plan for informal review and discussion. The Applicant is proposing to expand First Energy Stadium with a 14,220 square foot addition on the 15.71 acre site located at 1900-2000 Centre Avenue.
- (b) Correspondence: Hawk Valley Associates issued an informal review on June 25, 2022.
- (c) Discussion: The Applicant informally presented the Sketch Plan and other documents to the Planning Commission, which included discussion on: zoning compliance; site accessibility; parking and loading; expansion and facility requirements; environmental compliance; stormwater management; neighborhood compatibility; project schedule; and other issues.
- (d) Action on the Plan: The Planning Commission took no action on the Sketch Plan. The Applicant was instructed to submit a Preliminary Plan Application for formal review. Hawk Valley Associates shall prepare a tentative project review schedule for the next 3 months.

(13) 527-529 Court Street (Baer Building) Sketch Plan Application PC 2022-114; 527 and 529 Court Street; Sketch Plan Review

- (a) Application: The Applicant (R&R Fish, LLC) submitted a Sketch Plan for informal review and discussion. The Applicant is proposing to redevelop the 3 to 7-story Baer Building that was formerly occupied by commercial office uses with 36 residential apartment units at the 6,100 square foot parcel of land located at 527-529 Court Street.
- (b) Correspondence: Hawk Valley Associates issued an informal review on June 27, 2022.
- (c) Discussion: The Applicant was not present at the Planning Commission Meeting. Therefore, the Sketch Plan was not discussed. The Applicant has notified the Planning Office that revisions shall be considered and a modified proposal shall be submitted for review.
- (d) Action on the Plan: The Planning Commission took no action on the Sketch Plan.

(14) Municipal Ordinances and PC Report

- (a) SALDO Amendment to Section 515-312(B) and 515-312(D): The draft amendments were last revised and issued on May 18, 2022. The draft amendments are being reviewed by the Planning Commission Solicitor. The Planning Commission shall consider and provide a formal recommendation to City Council on July 26, 2022.
- (b) Planning Commission Annual Report for 2021: The Annual Report was finalized by the Planning Commission and shall be presented to City Council at a future meeting.
- (15) Old Business, Project Updates and Pending Plans: A Supplemental Report that includes the status of all other active projects has been prepared by Hawk Valley Associates and attached as part of the Planning Commission Meeting Agenda and these Meeting Minutes.
- (16) Active Plans Requiring Time Extensions: There were no active plans that required a time extension for review as per the provisions specified by the City of Reading and PAMPC.

(17) Announcements and Other PC Business

(a) Ermete Rafaelli: The Planning Commission expressed their condolences and memories of the life of Ermete Rafaelli who served on the Planning Commission for 32 years. He was an inspiration and mentor to several current members of the Planning Commission.

- (b) Workshop Meeting: The Planning Commission determined that a second meeting should be scheduled on the 3rd Tuesday of each month in order to consider informal review of plans and projects that do not require formal action. The workshop meetings shall be advertised and posted in accordance with the provisions of the City of Reading and PAMPC.
- (c) Greenhouse Community: The monthly meeting was cancelled and rescheduled.
- (18) Approval of Planning Commission Meeting Minutes from May 24, 2022: A motion was made by Commissioner Cinfici to approve the Planning Commission Meeting Minutes with minor edits and corrections. Commissioner Olsen seconded the motion. The vote on the motion was unanimously approved by the Planning Commission (5-0).
- (19) Next Planning Commission Meeting: Tuesday, July 26, 2022 at 6:00 pm.
- (20) Adjournment: Commissioner Conklin made a motion to adjourn the June 28, 2022 Planning Commission Meeting. Commissioner Cinfici Conklin DeLeon seconded the motion. The vote on the motion was unanimously approved (5-0). The meeting concluded at 9:57 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Jerome Skrincosky, Planning and Zoning Consultant

Planning Commission Supplemental Report: June 28, 2022 Old Business, Project Updates and Pending Plans PC Meeting Agenda Item 15: Projects Not Requiring Action

The following is a status report of projects that have been approved, active or pending as of June 28, 2022:

- (1) Alvernia Berkshire Building; Final Land Development Plan: The Planning Commission approved the Final Plan on April 26, 2022, subject to conditions issued on April 15, 2022. The Applicant will need to resolve the sewage facility planning requirements. The Final Plan can be endorsed by the Planning Commission and released for recording once all issues have been resolved.
- (2) Auto Repair Center at 600 South 9th Street Land Development Plan: The Planning Commission approved the Final Plan on May 24, 2022, subject to conditions. Hawk Valley Associates issued a follow-up review on June 17, 2022. A municipal improvements agreement may be required by the Public Works Department. Once these issues are resolved, the plan can be endorsed by the Planning Commission and released for recording.
- (3) Dream Ventures (100 South 4th Street) Final Land Development Plan: The Planning Commission approved the Final Plan on March 22, 2022, subject to conditions. The Applicant will need to resolve the sewage facility planning requirements with the departments and agencies with jurisdiction. The Final Plan can be endorsed by the Planning Commission once the conditions of approval have been resolved by the Applicant.
- (4) Elm Street Daycare: Final Annexation and Land Development Plan: The Planning Commission approved the Final Plan on April 26, 2022, subject to conditions. The Applicant has resolved the sewage facility planning requirements with the departments and agencies with jurisdiction. An improvements agreement shall be required by the Public Works Department. The Final Plan can be endorsed by the Planning Commission and released for recording once all issues have been resolved. A follow-up review was issued by Hawk Valley Associates on May 16, 2022.
- (5) Habitat for Humanity Miltimore Development Project: The Planning Commission reaffirmed approval of the Final Plan on February 22, 2022. Resolution 57-2022 was approved by City Council. The municipal improvements agreement, stormwater management agreements and the approved Final Plan should be endorsed by the Planning Commission and released for recording. Construction has commenced on this revitalization and redevelopment project.
- (6) Hope Rescue Mission: Final Land Development Plan: The Planning Commission reaffirmed final approval on April 26, 2022, subject to the applicant resolving all issues. The municipal improvements agreement and the stormwater management agreements need to be executed. Once endorsed, the Final Plan can be endorsed by the Planning Commission and released for recording. A follow-up review was issued by Hawk Valley Associates on May 17, 2022.
- (7) Iglesias Pentecostal; Preliminary Final Land Development Plan: The Applicant has submitted a Preliminary Land Development Plan for review and consideration. The Applicant will need to resolve several issues that have been included as part of the review letter issued for this plan. A time extension for the review of this plan has been granted through August 30, 2022.
- (8) Iron Gate Land Development Plan Application: The Applicant has submitted a Preliminary Land Development Plan for review and consideration. The Applicant will need to resolve several issues that have been included as part of the review letter issued for this plan. Correspondence has been exchanged between the City of Reading and the Applicant. A time extension for the review of this plan has been granted through July 30, 2022.

- (9) Jan and Wil Properties Land Development Plan: The Planning Commission approved the Final Plan on May 24, 2022, subject to conditions. Hawk Valley Associates issued a follow-up review on June 17, 2022. A municipal improvements agreement may be required by the Public Works Department. Once these issues are resolved, the plan can be endorsed by the Planning Commission and released for recording.
- (10) MJ Reider; Final Annexation and Land Development Plan: The Planning Commission approved the Final Plan on April 26, 2022, subject to the applicant resolving all issues. The improvements agreement needs to be finalized and executed. Once endorsed, the Final Plan can be endorsed by the Planning Commission and released for recording.
- (11) Medical Arts Annexation Plan: The Planning Commission approved the Preliminary/Final Plan on May 24, 2022, subject to the applicant resolving all issues. There are no improvements for this project. Once endorsed, the Final Plan can be endorsed by the Planning Commission and released for recording.
- (12) Medical Arts Building Land Development Plan Application: The Planning Commission has determined that code compliance issues will need to be addressed in order to consider the proposed building addition for this redevelopment and adaptive reuse project. A time extension was granted by the Applicant through August 31, 2022.
- (13) Overlord Realty (916 N. 9th Street) Land Development Plan: The Planning Commission approved the Final Plan on March 22, 2022. All remaining issues for municipal approval have been resolved and there are no municipal improvements for this development. The Final Plan has been endorsed by the Planning Commission and released for recording.
- (14) Prince and Princesses Daycare; Final Annexation and Land Development Plan: The Planning Commission approved the Final Plan on April 26, 2022, subject to conditions. The Applicant has resolved the sewage facility planning requirements with the departments and agencies with jurisdiction. An improvements agreement shall be required. A follow-up review was issued by Hawk Valley Associates on May 17, 2022. The Final Plan can be endorsed by the Planning Commission and released for recording once all issues have been resolved.
- (15) Reading Station Building II Land Development Plan: The Planning Commission approved the Land Development Plan for Building II (GoPuff and 3-Rivers) on December 21, 2021, subject to conditions that included the requirements for a municipal improvements agreement, blanket easement agreement and sanitary sewer planning module. The Final Plan can be endorsed by the Planning Commission and released for recording once all issues have been resolved.
- (16) Reading Station Building D; Final Subdivision Plan: The Planning Commission approved the Final Plan on April 26, 2022, subject to conditions. An improvements agreement is required. The Applicant will need to resolve all issues before the plan can be endorsed and recorded.
- (17) Remcon Plastics Land Development Plan: The Planning Commission approval of the Final Plan on February 22, 2022. The municipal improvements agreement and stormwater management agreement were endorsed. The Final Plan can be endorsed by the Planning Commission and recorded by the Berks County Recorder of Deeds. Reaffirmation of approval may be required.
- (18) Saldano Banquet Hall Conditional Use Application 2022-01; 2040 Centre Avenue: City Council approved Conditional Use Application 2022-01 via Resolution 98-2022 on May 23, 2022, subject to conditions that will need to be resolved by the Applicant. A Minor Land Development Plan shall be required for this project.
- (19) Scheidner Annexation Plan: The Preliminary/Final Plan was approved by the Planning Commission on March 22, 2022. The Applicant has recorded the approved plan.

- (20) Scott Street Subdivision; Revised Final Subdivision Plan: The Planning Commission approved the Final Plan on April 26, 2022, subject to conditions. The Applicant has submitted a revised plan to address the unresolved issues. A follow-up review was issued by Hawk Valley Associates on June 17, 2022. An improvements agreement and stormwater management agreement shall be required. The Final Plan can be endorsed by the Planning Commission and released for recording once all issues have been resolved.
- (21) Super Natural Produce III Annexation and Land Development Plan: The Planning Commission approved the Final Plan on March 22, 2022, subject to conditions. The Applicant will need to obtain the HOP from PennDOT and the sewage planning requirements will need to be completed. A municipal improvements agreement and stormwater management agreement shall also be required. The Final Plan can be endorsed by the Planning Commission and released for recording once all of these issues have been resolved.
- (22) Villa Independent Cottages Preliminary Land Development Plan: The Preliminary Plan was reviewed by Hawk Valley Associates on March 17, 2022. A time extension was granted for the review of this project through August 24, 2022.
- (23) ZHB Applications: The Planning Commission has been advised of the pending applications that will be considered by the Zoning Hearing Board. The notifications have been provided to the Planning Commission for background information on future planning applications.

Respectfully submitted by Jerome Skrincosky, Planning and Zoning Consultant